

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
- OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON JUNE 16, 2015

The members of the Springfield Housing Authority met in Open Session at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts at 4:33 PM on June 16, 2015.

A copy of the Notice of Meeting, pursuant to Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Certificate as to Service of the Notice, was ordered spread upon the minutes of the meeting and filed for records.

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY

/s/William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

June 12, 2015

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, William H. Abrashkin, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on June 12, 2015 I filed in the manner provided by Section 23B, Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Clerk of the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, a Notice of Meeting of which the foregoing is a true and correct copy.

Attest:



William H. Abrashkin/Executive Director/  
Secretary to the Board

Chairman Warren called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Raymond Warren  
Willie Thomas  
Thomas Labonte  
Angela Robles  
Jessica Quinonez

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

William Abrashkin  
Nicole Contois  
Fidan Gousseynoff  
John Healy

Wallace Kisiel

The Board reviewed the materials on the Housing Court expansion project. Executive Director Abrashkin explained to the Board why it is important for the Springfield Housing Authority to support this project. He provided a brief history of the housing court system and stated that currently many residents of Massachusetts do not have an access to a Housing Court and once the project gets implemented they will be able to use many services provided by this judicial body, including Lawyer for a Day, Tenancy Preservation Program, Legal Counseling and others. In response to Commissioner Thomas's question he explained that adding the Springfield Housing Authority to the list of supporters is just one step on a long way to get the legislature's approval and finding sources of funding but getting more supporters is an important advocacy tool for this project. In response to Chairman Warren's comment about residents of large urban areas like Chelsea, Framingham, Malden, and Cambridge not having an access to a Housing court, Judge Abrashkin explained how residents there file cases either in the District Court or Superior Court. He also explained that the Springfield Housing Authority recently started filing cases not only in the Housing Court but also in the District Court and what advantages such a practice brings to the agency.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to join the list of supporters of the Housing Court expansion statewide.

The Board reviewed the materials with regards to 2015 Heating Supplies award recommendation. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve 2015 Heating Supplies award recommendations totaling \$56,382.31 as follows:

Suppliers	PO Amount	#Awarded Items
Baystate Plumbing 15 Mill Street Springfield, MA 01108	\$20,666.19	28 items
Bender Plumbing 197 Warwarme Ave. Hartford, CT 06114	\$28,661.62	68 items
FW Webb 145 Performance Blvd. Springfield, MA 01104	\$4,353.21	9 items
United Plumbing Supply 210 Hickory Street Springfield, MA 01139	\$2,701.29	7 items

The Board entered into discussion with regards to awarding a contract for roof replacement at Marble Street, Pine James Avenue and Kathryne Jones Apartments. By Chairman Warren's request John Healy explained where Kathryne Jones Apartments are located. Mr. Healy provided clarification on the subject to be voted on explaining that Marble Street was included into the bid as an alternate because the roofs in the development are in a bad shape and replacing them was included into the agency's 5 year plan however actual replacement will not be implemented at this stage due to ongoing negotiations with the City about demolishing the whole development. Mr. Healy also stated that the price for the project is good and the Springfield Housing Authority has worked with RCI Roofing after tornado and the experience was positive. Answering Commissioner Labonte's question John Healy confirmed that a bid will be required again if it is decided to replace the roofs at Marble Street.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a contract to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, RCI Roofing LLP of Southampton, MA in the amount of two hundred eleven thousand dollars (\$211,000.000) for roof replacement at Pine James Apts. and Kathryne Jones Apts., utilizing funds from the 2015 Capital Fund; appoint Executive Director, William H. Abrashkin as the Contracting Officer authorizing him to execute the contract.

The Executive Director's report started with Nicole Contois providing an update on solar credits issue. She informed the Board that previous plan on hiring a person who was a consultant for Cambridge Housing Authority did not work out so the SHA will be soon issuing a request for proposals to hire a consultant who would be evaluating all the benefits from many solar credit proposals that the Springfield Housing Authority keeps receiving. Ms. Contois stated that the main areas they want the consultant to focus will be net metering, buying futures and looking into utility allowance. John Healy informed that the first draft of the RFP is being finalized and is anticipated to be presented to the Board in August. In response to Chairman Warren's question Nicole Contois confirmed there are some opportunities for the SHA however since there are so many offers and this subject is new, complicated and requires a long-term commitment a very careful and detailed approach is necessary.

John Healy left the Conference Room at 4:52 pm.

Executive Director Abrashkin continued his report by providing an update on the Rental Assistance Demonstration project. He explained to the Board that if the Springfield Housing Authority becomes a RAD agency, the tenants will still be able to get their subsidy and pay low rent however the SHA will be able to generate so much needed funds through getting tax credits, syndication or borrowing money. He reported about his recent visit to the Cambridge Housing Authority which, since becoming a RAD agency, has been able to attract investments through tax credits, raise hundreds of millions and completely renovate all its properties. Judge Abrashkin indicated that the Springfield Housing Authority would like the CHA to assist the SHA with

preparing and submitting an application for RAD so he suggested hiring the CHA's director Greg Russ as a consultant and Mr. Russ is taking this initiative for his Board's approval. Executive Director Abrashkin stated that there are many firms like Wynn and other developers who have offered their services to the SHA but he would prefer to work with the Cambridge Housing Authority. In response to Commissioner Thomas's request Judge Abrashkin clarified that a RAD agency can also be a Move To Work agency like CHA) and what benefits and advantages MTW program can bring to a local housing authority.

An update on the RAD was followed by an update on the Capital Assistance Program, which, as Judge Abrashkin described, came out of former Governor Patrick's Housing Reform legislation. Mr. Abrashkin explained that many of the provisions of the proposed reform did not go through but one of the provisions that passed stipulates providing capital improvement services by large, more professional local housing authorities to smaller authorities for a fee paid by DHCD. Judge Abrashkin stated that according the correspondence recently received from the DHCD the SHA now has only 6 business days to submit its questions and plan on bidding. He expressed his concern about such unreasonable timeframe taking into consideration how much time is needed for the staff to review the documentation, make a decision, work on the budget and the proposal itself, then get an approval from the Board. He stated the program has some potential for the Springfield Housing Authority but so many factors need to be analyzed and evaluated before proceeding with the bid. Judge informed the Board that he is currently trying to reach the DHCD Undersecretary to address this issue and request more reasonable deadline. In response to Chairman Warren's question about how the agencies which will be providing this type of services for a fee are selected Wallace Kisiel indicated that an agency must have 500 and over units in its portfolio and submit a bid.

Judge Abrashkin also provided most updated information about an application submitted by SHA to a HUD grant in the amount of \$150,000 for two years to evaluate the effectiveness of TRS Program. Executive Director Abrashkin informed the Board that information prepared by the Regional Employment Board and the evaluator had been submitted to HUD and the response is expected by the end of the month as soon as it is reviewed by the Technical Assistance Center.

On the subject of Marble Street Demolition- Disposition Application Mr. Abrashkin informed the Board that the SHA and the Chief Development Officer Kevin Kennedy submitted to Congressman Neal a Joint Memo prepared by Consultant Joe Schiff and edited by the Executive Director. The purpose of the Memo is to get the Congressman's assistance in organizing a meeting with the HUD Secretary Julian Castro or his designee to get their support on the Marble Street project. He reminded that demolition of the development is in interests of the Marble street residents who will be getting relocation vouchers if the development is demolished.

The Executive Director continued his report by informing the Board that he has just received an approval from HUD's regional office in Boston to move forward with the project at 90 Carew Street. A non-profit organization DevelopSpringfield is planning to purchase a building at 90 Carew Street

which is currently owned by a Church in order to build and develop to the SHA's specifications and rent it subsequently to the Section 8 Program.

Judge Abrashkin reminded the Board about the TRS Golf tournament scheduled for 7/20/15 and the staff picture which was scheduled for 6/22/2015 but needs to be re-scheduled due to a REAC inspection at one of the developments. He finished his report by informing the Board that the computer project is moving forward and the administrative offices now have a wifi system.

The Board accepted the Accounts Payable report for the month of April 2015. In reference to reconciliation fees paid to Lyon & Fitzpatrick Chairman Warren inquired if there is any control over authorizing using legal services and what measures are being undertaken to make sure the managers and other staff members keep legal expenses at more reasonable level. Judge Abrashkin explained that most of the time before contacting Attorney Chesky the staff tries to resolve their cases through sending out Notices and letters, conducting informal meetings, signing agreements with residents however sometimes all these administrative measures do not work and some cases must be brought to Court. The Executive Director also stated that the Springfield Housing Authority has been and will be considering hiring an in-house counsel which might not be in best interests of the agency taking into account a large number of cases to be filed every month, more workload on the Deputies and lack of experience compared to L&F attorneys.

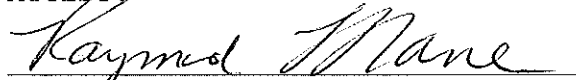
Chairman Warren asked for the Board's consideration to enter into Executive Session. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was by a roll call vote (Warren - Aye, Thomas - Aye, Robles - Aye, Labonte - Aye, Quinonez - Aye) unanimously


VOTED: To enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and to discuss the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property; to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and to not reconvene in Open Session.

There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority, upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:38 PM.

ATTEST:

  
Raymond Warren, Chairman

  
William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

